

The Under 1600 grade competition is now a regular event on Wednesday nights and the latest tournament had lots of twists and turns. After round 3, Robert Arthurton from Skegness and myself were joint leaders having won all our games and we went head to head in round 4.

I, as white, opened with the Benoni attack 1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 c5 4. d5 exd5 5. cxd5 d6 6. e4 g6 followed by the King's Indian by black 7. f4 Bg7 8. Bb5+ Nfd7 9. a4 0-0 10. Nf3 Na6 11. 0-0 Nb4 and after we have both castled Robert's knight on b4 and bishop on g7 are threatening.

I responded with 12. Re1 a6 13. Bf1 Nf6 14. h3 h5 15. Qb3 Re8 16. Nd2 Nh7 17. Na2 a5 18. Nxb4 axb4 doubling up black's b-pawns but now my pawn on a4 is under threat 19. Bb5 Bd7 20. Bxd7 Qxd7 21. Nc4 Qc7 22. a5 Nf8 23. Nb6 Ra6 24. Ra2 Nd7 25. Nxd7 Qxd7 26. Qc4 Qc7 27. Qb5 Rea8 and now my pawn on a5 is doomed (see diagram).

However, all was not lost as I had some counterplay as I played 28. Be3 Rxa5 29. Rxa5 Rxa5 30. Qe8+ Kh7 31. f5 Bd4 32. Bxd4 cxd4 33. fxg6+ fxg6 34. Rf1 bringing my rook into play with blacks rook out of the action 34. ... Kh6 35. Qf8+ Kg5 36. Qf4 mate.

Unfortunately, I lost my remaining 2 games to finish on 4 points whilst Robert won in round 5 as did CP Barron who, having joined the competition in round 2 and winning all his games thereafter. Robert and CP met in round 6 and a draw meant that they shared the win on 4.5 points.

Lincoln Chess Club play at the Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, 32 Newland. LN1 1XJ on Wednesdays at 7.30pm. Although we are yet to meet due to the lockdown www.lincolinchessclub.co.uk

